

REMARKS

Claims 7-21 are pending in the present application. Claim 7 is the only independent claim.

As a preliminary, it is noted that the claim for priority and the receipt of the priority document are not acknowledged in the Office Action. Such acknowledgment is respectfully requested.

Next, in the Office Action, claims 7-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over US 6,829,026 to Sasaki et al. ("Sasaki").

Sasaki is a U.S. Patent issued in December 7, 2004 based on a US application filed on October 7, 2002 and published on May 8, 2003. Since the PCT filing date of the present application is April 17, 2003, Sasaki has an effective date under section 102(e) on October 7, 2002.

A Statement of Common Ownership under section 103(c) is submitted in this paper. See MPEP 706.02(I)(2). Accordingly, it is submitted that the rejection should be withdrawn.

In conclusion, the invention as presently claimed is patentable. It is believed that the claims are in allowable condition and a notice to that effect is earnestly requested.

If there is, in the Examiner's opinion, any outstanding issue and such issue may be resolved by means of a telephone interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Request for Reconsideration
Serial No. 10/509,762
Attorney Docket No. 042636

If this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of the response period. Please charge the fee for such extension and any other fees which may be required to our Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP



Nicolas E. Seckel

Attorney for Applicants

Reg. No. 44,373

Telephone: (202) 822-1100

Facsimile: (202) 822-1111

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